

J. H. Attwood

A

✻ JUBILEE ESSAY ✻

—ON—

Imperial Confederation

AS AFFECTING

MANITOBA AND THE NORTHWEST.

BY COL. P. H. ATTWOOD.

PART I.
OUR PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

PART II.
THE QUESTION OF RACE.

PART III.
THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE
C. P. AND H. B. RAILWAYS.

WINNIPEG :
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PART 1ST.

In designing a permanent building, the skilled architect strives to display, not only the fertility of his imagination by producing harmony of outline, but he also blends the practical with the beautiful in his endeavors to produce on the mind of the casual observer the most pleasing effect. He also sees to it, that the structural adaptation from foundation to finish is such as to be beyond the criticism of his professional competitors; he leaves nothing to chance, he takes nothing for granted; but all his details are worked out so perfectly that, should the final construction fall to the lot of another, no member, however minute, will have to be supplied by his successor.

In like manner, and with the same solicitude, should those who are charged with the responsibility of creating and securing our national being seek to lay its foundation in righteousness, perpetuity and peace; so that when the keystone of our destiny, now so near completion, shall have crowned our hopes and thoroughly fused us with national life; when all props and exterior influences shall have been withdrawn, our Empire will be a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

The index finger of public sentiment throughout Great Britain and her dependencies evidently indicates a change in the relations which they have hitherto borne towards each other, the tendency being to link themselves together by an insoluble bond of mutual dependency. They are moved to say with one of old, "For whither thou goest I will go, and where, thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," a fidelity which being chastened by time, and ripened by experience, will qualify them to stand throughout all time, side by side and shoulder to shoulder, not as parent and offspring, as formerly, but as equals in power, prowess and council.

The coming change, though still in the inceptive state, is engaging the attention of some of the best minds in both hemispheres. Men of high attainments, both political and social, are approaching its consideration with honesty of purpose and

high resolve, and it becomes the duty of all patriotic men to contribute their moiety of thought, and to submit for consideration such subjects as will constitute the basis of such settlement.

The religious and social future of our people having been worked out on tacitly acknowledged lines suitable to their times and circumstances, and being fairly well established, will require but little attention but to accord by Imperial decree, to all sections and communities their political rights without causing undue friction or ostracism, will indeed be a herculean task, worthy the most profound efforts of our national architects.

It would be presumptuous for any man or set of men from any given locality to formulate a system by which such a grand conception can be materilized, or to attempt to solve so difficult a problem as that of *Imperial Federation*. Such a solution can only be the result of wise counsel by many men, from different standpoints; but in view of what may be, it will be well to take time by the forelock, and discuss to some extent, how, with our present autonomy, such a change would be likely to effect the future of the Northwest generally, but more especially the Province of Manitoba.

It having become an axiom in politics that large corporations move slowly, and that constitutional changes are only amongst the possibilities, it will be well to consider, whether or no, in case of such consolidation, our Manitoban autonomy possesses such sovereign powers, such buoyancy and freedom of action, as will enable us to accommodate ourselves to our altered circumstances in relation to either Federal or Imperial power, and if complications of any kind are within the range of the possibilities, to look them squarely in the face and provide for their prevention. In doing so, it will be well to remember that Manitoba has never been constitutionally admitted to confederation, inasmuch as the fourteen thousand loyal resident British subjects who at the time of its admission to the union were practically a sovereign power exercising constitutional rights both political and judicial, under the name of the government of Assiniboia, were never consulted or recognized in respect to it, as provided by the British North America Act; but instead, the now twice notorious Louis Riel, who had unlawfully overthrown the local government, and taken possession of its seat, was by virtue of his usurpation and

through the influence of his abettors—of whom more hereafter—permitted to prescribe the terms of admission; and, to use the words of the Hon. John Norquay, in his masterly and patriotic budget speech of April 16th, 1884, “if the truth must be told, Manitoba was forced into confederation, figuratively speaking, at the point of the bayonet.” The baneful effect of such a method has ever since been felt as a hindrance to the full and healthy development of the country, and notwithstanding the marvelous growth which has characterized the age, there is a canker at the heart which sooner or later will have to be removed, and which it becomes our duty now to lay bare and to point out.

As a guide to our conclusions, and in due course of seeking the prompt recognition of our claims to free agency, we have only to review the history of the Dominion since Confederation to realize the necessity of so securing and adjusting our theoretical, as well as our practical rights, that the volition of any other will than our own cannot disturb the peace and harmony of the Province. Instances are not wanting, both east and west, where certain foreign and anti-British elements have become restive under Federal rule; and because of their holding a set of exclusive preconceived opinions, have clamoured for privileges and considerations of various kinds, to the prejudice of their fellow subjects—privileges which have neither been sought nor accorded to other portions of the people. These demands have had to be appeased by the lubricating process of grants and subsidies, and these, not in proportion to the numerical or elective strength of the disaffected ones, but in proportion to their ability to clog the governmental machinery at the point of their political influence.

Taking it for granted that in their perhaps pardonable haste to condone a treasonable offense, the Dominion Government, directly under the inspiration of the same power that precipitated the rebellion of 1869, overlooked or forgot the recognized government of Assiniboia, and by so doing sowed the seeds of discontent, which have never since been eradicated, and that they inflicted a serious wrong against the exercise of British constitutional rights, as established by the primitive government of that day, it is not too late yet for the people of Manitoba, through their Legislature, to fall back on first principles and declare that it will be undignified in them, and unjust to future generations, to be negatively carried along by the current of events, and by a guilty indifference, tacitly

consent to fix for all time the concurrent powers of Manitoba as at present constituted, in comparison with those of the other Provinces of the Dominion.

To secure to this Province all the rights exercised by the original government, and which have never been forfeited or bartered away, but only overshadowed for the time being by a superior power, it will be necessary to refer to them, and the discovery is made that years before the rebellion of 1869 it established and controlled the law relative to lands in the Province; that it prescribed the amount of duties to be paid by foreign countries, and made provision for the collection of the same; that it exercised sovereign jurisdiction over all courts, civil and criminal; that it created all offices, and appointed all officers; that it provided the means and manner by which all revenue should be levied, collected and disbursed; that it recognized the flag of the Empire, and that in all ways the people lived in respect to the laws of Great Britain, and that by no act of theirs, nor of the Dominion or Imperial Government, has that of Assiniboia been extinguished or abolished, only overshadowed. These are strong grounds to take, but they are constitutional, and if properly represented to the Privy Council of Great Britain, would, without doubt, be sustained. Assuming then that such is the fact, and that the germ of Provincial sovereignty lies hidden somewhere beneath the accumulated history of a few short years, will it be wise to allow such a precious presence to lay dishonoured at a time when its assertion would give fresh impetus and direction to our national life? Manitoba has a grand future in store, but it is staggering under its load of disabilities, and, notwithstanding all the whipping and spurring, flaunting of flags, jingo speeches, and sputter, yet like an instinctive race horse, who feels himself handicapped, it refuses to take the bit, but stands champing and pawing, watching the time when it can rush to its destiny on equal terms with its sister provinces.

If the foregoing premises are correct, the remedy is apparent, and we must lead up to it without hesitation. We must have:

1st—The right to enjoy the constitutional privileges and attributes of a sovereign power so far as having absolute jurisdiction over our own revenue; the appointment of all public servants of whatever kind, and the control of all our internal affairs, the same as was enjoyed by the original government of Assiniboia.

2nd—That having been deprived of our lake front by the decision of Her Majesty awarding the disputed territory to Ontario, we should seek an equivalent by an extension of boundary northward to the shores of Hudson's Bay.

3rd—The absolute control of all the undisposed of land within the boundaries so extended.

4th—A fair and equitable compensation, in money or otherwise, for all the lands disposed of within the said boundaries by the Dominion Government, save that given for homesteads and pre-emptions to actual settlers.

5th—Representation in the Senate and Commons of the Dominion in proportion to the material interests of the Province as compared with the other Provinces, till such time as it can enter on terms of equality upon the basis of representation by population.

6th—The unconditional right to charter railways in any direction within the boundaries of the Province.

7th—And lastly, the settlement of all accounts current on business principles, dating from the unlawful overthrow of the Government of Assiniboia to the present time.

These rights re-established, and the suspended life of the Government of Assiniboia recognized, it will then be in order to declare that the link of legislative succession is restored, and that whilst heartily favorable to a union with both Federal and Imperial powers for all purposes of offence, defence and commerce, yet it must be on a re-adjusted basis, having the full consent of the loyal inhabitants of the Province to cement the terms. We shall then have an individuality of our own; our allegiance will not be a subsidiary one, obtained under gauzey pretenses, but it will be the free-will obligation of patriotic people. We shall then present the grand spectacle of one of a community of dependencies, each on its own behalf, clustering our hopes and aspirations around the magnetic pole of the Empire, not as fragmentary, unpolished parts of the national structure, but "fitly joined together as every part supplieth."

As the natural result of this change of relations, the Federal powers will be restrained to a large extent, each Province will contribute a fixed sum per capita for Federal purposes, instead of as at present emptying its coffers, and pouring its wealth into the general treasury, and then, instead of our having to humiliate ourselves and our public men in en-

gaging in periodical battles with the authorities, foot to foot, and knee to knee, for the purpose of wresting a fragment of our own contribution from the common purse, we shall be in the happy position of dispensers instead of receivers. This is the only position which comports with the dignity of a free people. All other conditions tend to subserviency, and later on to servility, and finally to discontent and anarchy.

To make the case clear, and to realize the future position of the Province, it will be necessary to look at the financial as well as the political result of such a change. From a state of inert dependence, without resources, a condition inconceivably intolerable to an enterprising people who are surrounded by the material wealth of this great heritage, and from being the recipients of a subsidy of \$450,000 per annum from all sources, with the possibility of an increase in the far off future to \$600,000, the Province would then expand into a sovereignty, assuming to bear all its own burdens, besides bearing its share in the expense of the Federal Government.

Out of the 96,000,000 acres of land within the present boundaries of Manitoba, it has recently been shown that after conceding all the demands and deductions of the Federal Government, there would still be 6,000,000 acres of first-class arable land left to the Province, which, sold at \$1.50 per acre and the proceeds capitalized at five per cent., would yield a perpetual income of \$450,000. The proceeds of timber sales at a low estimate would be \$120,000.

Estimating the population as at present, 95,000, and making an approximate computation upon the amount of duty paid on goods that enter the Province, the customs department would yield a revenue of not less than \$800,000. The excise departments, estimated on the above basis, would net \$225,000. These sources of income would foot up the very creditable sum of \$1,595,000. Add to that the various revenues derivable from the taxation of permissible enterprises of various kinds, and we realize in prospect a very handsome balance every year to be expended in local improvements, such sum amounting in all, to not less than \$2,000,000.

To give effect to the foregoing outline, and in order to capitalize the value of our public lands, active measures would have to be instituted with the view to emigration, and whereas at present there is no incentive to our Government to increase our population, in fact it has been shown to be rather the other

way, then the object would be two-fold—the realization of cash, and interest-bearing securities—and the introduction of perhaps several million tax producers, whose industry would still further swell the provincial exchequer. By a further reference to the justly famous and patriotic budget speech of our premier, the Hon. John Norquay, of 1884, the contrast is vividly shown. When speaking of the Federal immigration policy, and its effects on this country, he says: “Their immigration policy, while tending to build up the Dominion, does so in an especial manner at the expense of this Province. Each new settler within our limits becomes at once a revenue producer for Canada, and a tax on the resources of Manitoba, which has not been enabled to carry out the objects of government, as the other provinces are enabled, by the assistance of the Federal authorities to carry out. (Hear, hear.) Who gets the fees for the sale of our land? The Federal Government. Who pockets the excise and customs duties raised by the Province, duties largely increased, as I have said, by every additional settler? The Federal Government. We bear the burden, they draw the revenue, an arrangement altogether too one-sided for us. (Hear, hear.) There should surely be some sort of proportion between our revenue and our responsibilities, as our population increases so should be our power of providing for the wants of that population. (Cheers.)”

The above noble and patriotic utterances, coming as they do from the highest representative of this people, and being doubtless, the result of much careful and well-digested thought, may fairly be said to comprehend, in an exceedingly condensed form, the whole contention of this Province. They imply what every one of the Anglo-Saxon race should claim, that revenue from land, timber, and minerals legitimately belongs to the community in which they are placed, and that any diversion from such purpose produces strained relations, creative of discontent and paralysis.

That this view of the case as presented by the Hon. John Norquay, met with universal approval, and was accepted as an earnest of future legislation on that question, is attested by its electric effect upon the people, and by the entire subsidence of an unseemly agitation which at that time swept across the surface of this otherwise tranquil and peace-loving Province.

PART 2ND.

However reluctantly the task of discussing the question of "Race" may be approached, yet candor and justice, to this subject, seem to demand that it be discussed in this connection.

It is therefore out of no factious spirit that it is brought before the public, but only as one of the many underlying causes of stagnation effecting this country which party politicians cannot engage, with safety to themselves or the interests they advocate, but which nevertheless enters largely into and gives complexion to our system of representation.

It must be borne in mind, that the true politician, like the faithful historian, is constrained to deal honestly with things as he finds them, and as he is not supposed to have contributed materially to their existence, so he cannot be responsible to any great extent for their consequences; this being admitted, it becomes his duty in due course to expose any lurking evil which impedes or disturbs the natural functions of the body politic.

This is the only apology for referring to and bringing to notice that invidious and vexed question of "Race," which will form the subject of the next few paragraphs.

Theoretically, according to British constitutional law, wherever the flag of our country is unfurled, it carries with it liberty and more especially equality of rights to the citizen, and whether its folds encircle the overflow of other nationalities or that of the mother country only, we extend to all the right hand of fellowship and in the fullness of our heart, those who are aliens by birth are quickly transformed into subjects of Her Britannic Majesty, and invited without coercion to blend their efforts with ours according to their respective lights for the public weal. But practically, and whilst it is true that a very large proportion of those of foreign extraction loyally vie with us and with each other in upholding our common language, modes and habits, to the extinguishment of their own, and ally themselves honestly with one or other of the political parties for the good of the whole, yet the French people, both here and in Quebec, still maintain their

national exclusiveness, and for purposes of their own are as essentially the same people now as when they left their fatherland, centuries ago, and though they have been so long with us, yet they are not of us. The thought of "Imperial France" with its historic memories is, with them still cherished and carefully cultivated, and whilst outwardly they conform in some measure to our customs, and for reasons join with us in singing our National Anthem, yet the burden of their song is "Vive La France." Their yearnings remind us to some extent of the Jewish sentiment so pathetically expressed during their Babylonish captivity, when they exclaimed: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Cold indeed must be the heart that refuses to pay homage to the land of its forefathers, and unworthy his race the man who dishonors his kindred by ingratitude or desertion. All true men spurn such an one as he deserves. So far we may well honor the devotion of the French people; but they should bear in mind that theirs is a voluntary, unsolicited surrender, and has its counterpart in every individual new settler who joins this grand confederacy, and like as the blushing maiden who plights her troth at the matrimonial altar is permitted to love none the less those of kin because of her vow, yet must she love her husband more than all the world beside, so they like her can loyally cherish childhood's dearest memories, and as the changeful realities of daily life meet them at every turn they can have sweet solace to sanctify the heart like the influence of expiring chimes from some distant Sabbath bell.

Thus far but no farther can they go; the home of their adoption must have priority over all others if they claim protection from the British flag. This the French people have not done. Theirs has been a continuous struggle for supremacy; a cool, calculating, insidious method of carrying out their selfish purposes; a mixture of complaint, defiance, exultation and intrigue far beyond the practice of English speaking people. They endeavor to compass ends by strategy and united effort which others accomplish by labor and persistent industry. Not satisfied with enjoying rights secured by treaty to the Province of Quebec, they are repeating their history in this Province by rigidly drawing the dividing line of "Race," meanwhile, and without any cause, complaining that they are

compelled to force the right of ordinary citizenship, when it is clear that their very system from centre to circumference, both civil and ecclesiastical, isolates them from the ordinary advance of our common civilization. They have secured, for the time being, at a very large cost to the people of this Province, the use of their language in the courts and in the legislature. They have secured a control of the electorate entirely out of proportion to their numerical strength, and they are seizing the most available points throughout this Province and the Northwest as bases of operation, such as will in their view hold the balance of power, both legislative and municipal, with any government which, by prearrangement, will grant their demands. In fact, they live and move in an atmosphere bristling with fancies of a distinct nationality, which, though suppressed, yet ever and anon come to the surface through the utterances of the more incautious amongst them, as, for instance, the following, presumably from the pen of Hon. A.A. LaRiviere, a member of the Provincial Government. Writing in his paper, *Le Manitoba*, the French organ, he says: "*Manitoba was originally intended for a French Province, and it must and shall be one.*" Could national disloyalty go farther, except to appear in open revolt, which it did a few weeks later at Fish Creek and Batoche, and yet this organ, instead of being questioned for complicity, was, because of the exigence of "Race," and behest of party, quietly condoned.

In dealing with this question of "Race" from a purely Provincial standpoint, it does seem like ungenerously begging the question to link in all the French of the Dominion, when it is known that they of Quebec were long ago ceded certain rights, the importance of which were at the time not realized, nor were their far-reaching efforts even obscurely anticipated, but which must nevertheless be respected and endured. It is, however, from this very direction that danger is to be apprehended, for being a distinct people, without civil guidance of their own, they have become in the truest sense, a vast hierarchy, whose methods it is not for us to criticise, only in so far as they effect them in their relation to us.

This hierarchal form of government as exercised by the French is, practically speaking, an alternative one which, by its concentration on the one hand, and by its subtlety and thoroughly diffusive character on the other hand, is more in accord with their natural instincts as a people, and hence, though nominally subordinate to the Federal power, it is by

far the stronger of the two; and without reference to their intelligence, it moves upon their social and political, as well as upon their religious sympathies, and hence the great danger to the State, for there can be no patriotism in the suffrage of a people who are swayed in their elective choice by the selfish will of an exclusive ecclesiasticism.

It will now be in order to show that the attitude assigned to the French is the correct one, and not fanciful or given in a spirit of petulant fault-finding, as may be alleged.

To do this it will only be necessary to refer the well-informed reader to the various means by which they have endeavored to enforce their pretensions; how they have been as a thorn in the flesh of the Dominion Government, and how they have endeavored to accomplish their purposes in this country by that peculiar system, the mere mention of which is considered a crime and an insult, but which honesty demands should be brought to notice. It is that of justifying and condoning the deflections of their people through the influence and pleading of their prelacy. It will be remembered how, in 1869, all the diplomatic and other correspondence in relation to the rebel Riel was conducted through that channel; it will be remembered, too, that the constituted government of Assiniboia was completely ignored, and that Riel was championed by the French prelacy, even to the extent of being sent, through their influence, to represent this people in Parliament, instead of being made to atone on the gallows at the time for his crimes against the State.

It is still fresh in the minds of all how, in the autumn of 1885, His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface wrote one of the most deeply emotional, eloquent and effective appeals on behalf of this man and his people ever written, and which proved to be the culminating effort of his life in that direction. It did honor to his great learning and ability as a special pleader, and would, if written in defence of constitutional authority, have immortalized his name. In reference to it, it is safe to say, that whilst we may be disposed to pay a high tribute, both to his head and heart in the production of so splendid and brilliant an effort, yet does it not strike the reader that this supreme piece of idealism was pointed in the direction which is here sought to be indicated?

This and similar writings and speeches throughout the Dominion created at the close of the rebellion a feeling of intense

agitation amongst the French, and whilst in this country nothing but the most dogged silence and apathetic indifference seemed to prevail, yet their true inwardness manifested itself at their indignation meetings on the "Champ De Mars" at Montreal and throughout the French Press of Quebec. It was then that "Race and Revenge" and many other sanguinary cries were uttered, which sent a thrill of enthusiasm amongst them. It was about then that a French armed vessel cast anchor in Quebec harbor, and they emphasized the hope that the day was not far distant when not only would the "Tri Color" of France wave from the masthead below, but that it would also float from the flagstaff above the citadel.

The following from the pen of the Hon. Mr. Justice Lorranger in his letters on the Federal Constitution is given without comment as indicating the extent to which they feel indebted to us for British fair play, and certainly justifies the position taken in these pages. His opening sentences are:—

"During the past century of British rule, the French race in Canada has been through many political crises and has fought many constitutional battles. It has, however, come out *triumphant* and averted the *dangers* that threatened it. The antagonism resulting from different institutions, traditions, languages and religious beliefs—irresistible where people of various origins dwell in the same territory—which influences them sometimes without their knowledge, and often against their will, has made the position of this race an exceptional one in the midst of the Anglo-Saxon population of the Confederation. The rivalry of races is the same as that which existed under former regimes but on a larger scale. Though tempered by the good feeling existing between the Provinces and *disguised* by the *apparent cordiality* of their relations, none the less exists, and whenever special circumstances give rise to a conflict between interest and friendly feeling, will certainly break out. That which occurred in the past may occur in the future, the multiplicity of political incidents and the complication of interests thereby occasioned render it morally certain. French-Canadians should, under the new regime as they did under the old, see with *jealous care* to the maintenance of their national rights, the preservation of their political autonomy, combat and prevent any aggression that may disturb these guarantees. The anomaly of our situation with respect to us even changed the signification of the terms of public law. Political union which for other nations means

increased force, natural development and concentration of authority, means for us feebleness, isolation and menace, and legislative union, political absorption."

Enough has now been said on this point to show how impossible it is to dovetail two distinct nationalities together, each having an individuality to maintain; at best such an union must produce a hydra-headed monster of government such as can never command the respect and devotion of the several races to whom this country is open as a refuge from the evils and, in some cases, the oppressions of the older States.

It is inconceivable that we should make any exception on behalf of those who are ever ready, according to their own showing, to place, as it were, a magazine under our national structure and explode it on the slightest pretext.

There is but one remedy, and that is apparent. We must be one people, with one sentiment and one language. Any other than our own must be abolished from our legislature, from our courts, from our statutes, and from our public schools.

We must have representation by population, pure and simple, and if we would be a happy, prosperous, contented, and a cheaply governed people, all national lines must be forever extinguished.

PART 3RD.

One of the burning questions at present agitating the people of this Province is disallowance, so called.

It consists in the right of the Dominion Government to annul railway charters granted by the legislature, running in a southerly direction to connect with American roads at the boundary, and thus bring them into direct competition with the Canadian Pacific Railway, which, by its charter, has secured within certain bounds a monopoly of the carrying trade of this country for twenty years from the date of its issue.

It is not relevant here to stop and consider the various contentions which are advanced either for or against disallowance. It is enough for us to know that a condition of things exist which are undesirable and very generally regretted, and if the truth must be told, very badly understood by our people, who, in their frantic efforts to secure an opening to the south, seem to have forgotten the infinitely greater necessity of railway communication to the north via Hudson's Bay. The early construction of this road would render the present contention a myth; it would result in a "change of front," and impart a vigor to this country that cannot now be estimated.

Different men may and do ascribe different causes as contributing to our present inertia, and disallowance is doubtless one of them, because if it means nothing else it implies inability to exercise the will power, which is the life stream of a free people. But on enquiry it will be seen that the great drawback does not arise from that, because even an increased number of railways does not always mean competition for freights; for they, like all large corporations, have their methods even in their differences, and combine against the public by pooling their earnings. More especially will this probably be the case if but one other line is admitted to the country.

It does not seem to be because the Province has not a sufficiency of railway service, as we have already nine hundred miles of first-class road, capable of doing twenty times the carrying trade we are able to offer; and until the land on

either side is settled and partially cultivated for a distance of at least twenty miles, it cannot be considered as being inaccessible to the people, or to have failed in rendering efficient service to the extent contended for—that of requiring the introduction of either foreign lines or an increased number of our own.

It does not seem to be on account of the rigorous climate, or the length of our winters. Men from all parts of the world are congregated here, and he is yet to be found who does not prefer the clear bracing atmosphere of our winter, and the uniform temperature of our summer, to that either to the east, west or south of us.

It does not seem to be because of the scarcity of timber and fuel, not forgetting our inexhaustible peat beds, or minerals of all kinds, including petroleum. These are all around us in immense supply.

It does not seem to be because of the lack of fertility in the soil, for nature seems to have excelled herself in this last great effort at production, as has now been clearly demonstrated to the world.

It is not because, food, clothing, implements, machinery and the like are inaccessible, and beyond the purchasing power of ordinary men.

Then what is it ?

It is manifestly because we have mistaken and refused our destiny, and have attempted to reverse the order of things by becoming a commercial people instead of producing wealth from the resources around us. We have attempted the status of mature life, and have depended on a continuous influx of capital for all purposes, when we ought to have created it by cultivating the soil, by producing the requirements and even luxuries of life from the inviting elements around us. We should long since have ceased to lean on the older Provinces for many things which we can produce at less cost, and in far greater abundance, than they. In other words, we should have developed our own powers for all purposes, instead of depending on that with capital obtained. We have provided all the appliances of a great people without the necessary reserve force to keep up the strain.

The reactionary absorption arising out of the cost of transportation has naturally produced the intermediate services of

a host of merchants and traders, whose numbers are far in excess of our power to sustain. This drain upon our resources is consequent upon our great distance from the markets of the world, but it nevertheless obstructs the free action of the producer by largely reducing the value of his slender output, and adding materially to the value of those vast supplies so necessary to equip even in a moderate way the artizan or agriculturist who, up to the present, have been the only producers of wealth.

This absorption of the earnings of the people has given undue prominence to our commercial interests at the expense of the industrial, and has offered, apparently, a more rapid and attractive avenue to the acquisition of wealth. We have by our own hand refused our destiny, and thereby delayed indefinitely the more permanent development of our vast resources, and produced the present paralysis.

Adopting the above theory, and without adverting to the various opinions in respect to this country, many of which are advanced at a venture by those who know nothing at all about it, the reader is asked whether it has ever occurred to him that the Canadian Pacific and the Hudson's Bay Railways—one having been and the other about to be built principally either by the direct contribution or upon the credit of the people—should not be like our rivers and inland waters, owned and operated as a public highway at the cheapest rate for the convenience and enrichment of the people.

If this idea is fully grasped, it will be seen how little there is to be either lost or gained by the retention or extinguishment of the monopoly clauses of the C.P.R. charter, more especially after the attitude of non-intercourse assumed by the the Americans on the fishery dispute.

The adoption of these roads by the people would change the whole future aspect of this Province and the Northwest, inasmuch as, if the freight rates were divested of their glamour and uncertainty, and properly adjusted by experts on ascertained principles, the existence or non-existence of the monopoly clauses, and protection or non-protection in the way of tariff, would be very unimportant factors in estimating reciprocity with the States, or railway connection with their lines. We would be in a position to defy competition. We should then be a people by ourselves, and could say in the truest sense of the word, "Canada for Canadians."

In order to lead up to the proposal at issue, it may be observed that Great Britain in times gone by, anticipating a Russian advance upon her East Indian possessions, and fearing that her route in their defence, by way of the Suez canal, might, through some unforeseen complication by the powers, be disputed at such an inconvenient time, expended large sums of money in searching for a Northwest Passage, as a means of reaching the east by the west more directly and surely than round by the Cape. Her efforts in that direction failed, and it was not till Canadian enterprise came to her rescue by constructing the C.P.R. from ocean to ocean that she has secured the long sought for Northwest Passage, or a direct route to India and the east through her own possessions.

The mother country has not failed to recognize the importance of the services thus rendered, and acting on her traditional doctrine that "the gods help those who help themselves," she is about to construct frontier defences on the British Columbian coast for the purpose of securing for all time the military highway thus loyally opened up to her by a devoted and patriotic people.

Taking it for granted that the C. P. R. is the long sought for Northwest passage, and that its acquisition is of paramount importance to Great Britain, not only as a means of gaining easy access to, and of defending her eastern possessions, but also of binding us in the truest sense of the word to the great confederacy, is it visionary to propose that she, in the abundance of her wealth, should contribute of her means to attain full possession of this road, and place it under efficient government control—the H. B. R. following in due course—for the benefit of the people.

It is nothing new in civilized jurisprudence to reverse the vested rights of the individual for the benefit of society as a whole—or, to accept the dogma, "the greatest good for the greatest number"—when such is shown to be a necessity. This idea is rapidly gaining ground, and when judiciously exercised, is productive of the very best results. It applies equally to large as well as to small corporations. The following are cases in point :

Great Britain, recognizing the great importance of telegraphy, and realizing the friction and extortion arising from excessive charges inflicted by private companies, determined

at one swoop to obliterate them, and to assume the whole system in the name of the people. To do this it became necessary to pay private enterprise one hundred and eighty-five million dollars as the purchase price ; but instead of turning monopolist and driving the people to the wall, she reduced the price of transmission from 25 cts for ten words to $12\frac{1}{2}$ cts for twenty words, or exactly one quarter the former cost, and after making the rate uniform throughout the country, they are enabled to pay 5 per cent. per annum on capital and to create a sinking fund which, in thirty years, will pay off the principal and leave fifteen million dollars in reserve. But the direct financial results to the nation are but a small part of the benefit derived, when convenience, cheapness and uniformity are considered, in addition to the enormously increased volume of business and the many happy manifestations of confidence in that inimitable government.

Another instance, equally striking, is found in the city of Birmingham, England. One difficulty after another arose between the corporation and the gas and waterworks company, till it was determined under what is known as the borough improvement scheme, to buy out the private corporation and assume control. To effect this responsibility, the city paid thirty millions of dollars in order to test the now exploded idea that none but private corporations can succeed financially with public works. The first act of the city council was to reduce the price of that great essential, water, to a mere nominal figure, and to reduce the price of gas from 87 cts. per thousand to 65 cts. The best results have followed. The income pays a good interest on capital. The city owns and controls this great enterprise, the people are satisfied because they are well served, and it is conceded that Birmingham is the cleanest, best lighted and best governed manufacturing town in England. Time would fail if it were undertaken to show that co-operation is the only just and finally safe method of conducting the above and such like enterprises, for be it remembered that all these and such like are but co-operation on a large scale.

It has been ascertained from official sources that the average cost of freight from all points on Canadian railways does not exceed \$1.35 per ton, and taking this astounding statement, if true, as the next starting point, what is it that suggests itself to the thoughtful mind ? Simply this : that upon

this principle of average cost, if the C. P. R. and the proposed H. B. R. were owned by the people and some uniform paying rate based upon the average earnings, both for passengers and freight, from all points on a somewhat similar principle as our post office, or the English telegraph system, it would make but little difference what part of the Dominion people chose for a home, as geographical space would be practically annihilated, and all would be equi-distant from the markets of the world, both for sales and purchases. There would then be no such thing as congestion of society at central points, for people would be no longer afraid to distribute themselves anywhere in the Dominion, according to their convenience or choice, knowing that the central advantages now enjoyed in our large cities would all be dissolved under the vivifying effects of a uniform rate of transportation. The people of this Province would then be as near the coal fields of Lethbridge, Saskatchewan and elsewhere, as those at Medicine Hat; the manufacturers of Montreal, Toronto or London would be as near the farmers and merchants at Calgary as they are those of Winnipeg or Brandon; and *vice versa*, the farmers and producers of this country would be as near the markets of the world as their brethren of the Eastern Provinces. Under the impetus thus given to agricultural and other industries, the effect would be almost electrical.

This would no longer be the Great Lone Land of the idealist and poet, but one teeming with life and business activity.

There is no doubt but the above proposition—viewed from that finely pointed commercial idea which prevails, and which has built up immense corporations and has caused a centralization of capital and placed it at the control of a comparative few to the exclusion of the producers and toilers, who by reason of their arduous occupation have neither time nor ability to resist the overwhelming influence of accumulative wealth—may seem utopian and, to some, very absurd; but unless we admit the dangerous doctrine and say that there is no advancement to be made on the present established methods of life, unless we believe that the people, through their skilled representatives, are incompetent to administer their affairs intelligently and profitably, unless we believe that the people have no right to deal with their own public works, for their own profit and convenience, and that in view of this ef-

feminacy, for it can be called nothing else, it is better to endow private corporations with our material enterprises and give them the opportunity of not only becoming the money centres of the country, but of turning this very power against the people, their benefactors, and of menacing rights and liberties which common gratitude should prompt them to uphold, then it will be well to examine and see whether our national wellbeing and the better distribution of wealth does not require the expropriation of the C.P.R. and the H. B. R. to the people as their lawful heritage.

Having taken a salient glance at the several questions effecting the future of this country, in a manner suited to the compass of this essay, the impression becomes irresistible that, unlike ordinary perspective, it seems in its lengthened view to widen and deepen as we proceed; but it is hoped that enough has been said to awaken some attention to the folly of drifting listlessly along with the current of events, no one knows where or whither,—leaving the unknown future to take care of itself. We should remember that Great Britain has belted the earth with her possessions, that the Dominion of Canada is the last great nation which will be founded westward with British antecedents. To the people of this country is committed the distinguished and important task of establishing the most advanced form of government, and one which can only expire with time itself. We have all past history to guide us in our choice; we have the glorious traditional and written history of our forefathers to urge us on our way and inspire us with strength and vigor of purpose. How essential then that we rise above our narrow prejudices and conceptions and align ourselves loyally with all true men and be prepared with them to seize on circumstances as they pass and assist in overcoming the exceptional conditions which are incident to this as to all new countries. It is useless to waste time in morbid repinings over the past, and to mingle our bitter disappointments with our hopes and aspirations. This is to throw away present opportunities and to strangle our energies in vain regrets over past issues.

The intangible influences which for a time appeared to sway our destiny, and which to some extent still vibrates in every texture of the body politic, will sooner or later, according as we are faithful citizens, disappear on the distant wavelets of time. Our national equilibrium will be permanently

established on the basis of an actual progress, and not upon fancied lines of an unnatural or illusive growth. To expect that the experiences gained by the accumulative forces which laid the foundation of former dynasties and nations would have enabled this virgin country, with its commingled races and instincts, to be nurtured into life, to be grafted upon the confederate stock and to be overshadowed by Imperial authority without an appeal or struggle, would imply a perfectness of administration almost more than human.

Happily for the future of this country public attention has again been turned to it, not as formerly in the spirit of greed and speculation, but with the desire to learn its true capabilities as an integer of the Dominion ; men seem disposed to lay aside their political contentions and to take reasonable council together. In the hope that such may be the case, this contribution is made, not in the spirit of presumption or dictation, but in the hope that at least some thought will be found worthy of kindly comment by those who know how earnestly the writer has labored anent gross misrepresentation for a better state of public sentiment in this country. Till such is arrived at, we never can, as British subjects, realize the full value of IMPERIAL FEDERATION.



